

**From:** Brent J. B. Petit  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/28/01 3:29pm  
**Subject:** Thoughts on the proposed settlement

To whom it may concern,

I am very troubled by the news of Microsoft's proposed 1 billion dollar settlement. If I understand the issue correctly, and I believe I do. I fail to see how giving Microsoft the opportunity to force their products into one of the few markets they do not hold monopoly power in benefits anyone. From what I see this is going to end up as a boon for Microsoft and a setback for those schools poor enough to qualify for this program.

My first question has to do with numbers. How much of the 1 billion dollars can be used for Microsoft software? Then, how does Microsoft price this software? If we're taking retail price then there is something seriously wrong. Next how does this take into account Microsoft's monopolistic licensing fees. Please, please, please make sure you understand the full impact of Microsoft's licensing. Pushing poor school districts into the Microsoft licensing web will do more harm than good over the next few years.

Next, are you telling me that you are going to subject these poor schools to Microsoft support. Ouch!

I would like to see Microsoft invest in poor schools. But, they cannot have any part in the decision making process. There must be a unbiased voice consulting these schools on the best technology solution. If in the end the schools choose to go with Microsoft, great. At least we know that this was a sound decision, not the effect of slimy salesmanship. After all, Microsoft can offer crazy benefits to the schools who use MS software since it costs MS very little.

Additionally, I am concerned with the length that you will go to ensure that the most damaging practices in the MS playbooks are stopped. Most of the coverage I saw was regarding bundling of Internet Explorer with Windows. Although this is a big issue, I don't see it as the most important. For years Microsoft has been hiding the high performance portions of their APIs until they could release new software to utilize it. One argument many pro-Microsoft voices have made is the competitors should just make better software. First off, it's not that simple when viewed along side Microsoft's bundling practices. On top of that Microsoft can ensure in many ways that their software outperforms the competitors.

I would like to see some sort of software review process not just for Microsoft but all software companies in order to protect the rights of consumers and competitors. After all, are many companies that are

including 'Spyware' and other information stealing code in their programs. This could be a benefit on many fronts.

Thank you for your time,  
Brent J. Petit  
Taxpayer